

OGDEN, UTAH, SATURDAY, MAY 29, 1915.

"DEATH REEL" OF AVIATORS

Of Thirteen Airmen Who Were Photographed In One Group In 1912 Only a Few Are Now Alive---Albert Bond Lambert, Head of U. S. Navy's Volunteer Auxilliary, Quits Flying

Back in 1912, when aviation was at the height of its popularity, twelve professional aviators and Albert Bond Lambert, millionaire patron of this thrilling sport and head of the United States navy's volunteer aviation auxilliary, posed for a panorama photograph. A few years later that film became known as the "Death Reel" because of the number of aviators on it that had been killed.

Today but a few of those aviators are alive with the exception of Albert Bond Lambert, who was the thirteenth on the film and who has practically given up the sport. Lambert flew for pleasure and never attempted the daring and fool-hardy performances that sent his friends to their death. His activities now are confined to giving advice and assistance to United States authorities.

The greatest of the aviators on the "Death Reel" was Lincoln Beachey who fell 3,000 feet to his death beneath the waters of San Francisco Bay on March 14 of this year while attempting aerial somersaults before a large crowd at the Panama-Pacific exposition.

Beachey was completing his second flight of the day when the accident occurred. Previously he had electrified the crowd with a series of aerial somersaults. He sought to add an additional thrill by making one of the famous perpendicular drops that usually followed one of his exhibitions. This proved too much of a strain for the frame of the monoplane. The machine was at an altitude of about 3,000 feet when Beachey shut off the power. For several hundred feet it dropped head downward for the earth and then the aviator grasped his control levers for the graceful descent that had characterized his previous flights.

MACHINE CRUMPLES.

The wings under the force of the speed with which he was falling, crumpled like an umbrella in a heavy wind, and the aeroplane, turning over and over in its fall, plunged into San Francisco Bay, narrowly missing a government transport.

Thousands of spectators rushed to the nearby water front in the hopes the aviator would arise to the surface but only a few splintered fragments of the aeroplane floated about the spot where the airman had disappeared. Launches put out from shore equipped with grappling hooks and a boat crew from the battleship Oregon which was anchored a short distance away, joined an attempt to recover the body of the aviator who was strapped to the seat of his machine 40 feet from the surface.

The search was kept up for three hours. Finally divers from the Oregon found the crushed form of the aviator entangled in the twisted steel and torn canvas of his machine. His body still was strapped to the seat of the aeroplane. With axes the divers freed the body from the wreckage and brought it to the surface.

An autopsy physician found Beachey's only injury was a broken right leg and from the swollen condition of the face it was evident that the airman met his death by drowning. Cuts on his hands indicated he had attempted to free himself from the straps that held him to his seat and it is believed that had this been accomplished he would have been able to fight his way to the surface and keep afloat long enough for the launches and power boats that put out immediately after his plunge, to rescue him.

BROTHER WITNESSES DEATH.

Hillary Beachey, a brother of the dead aviator, was on the deck of the United States transport Crook watching the flight and saw his brother and former flying companion plunge to his death. Hillary, who had been the more conservative aviator of the two, thereupon forswore flying forever.

Beachey's death is attributed to the fact that he changed from a biplane, to which he had been accustomed from the time he took up his daring avocation, to the more frail and collapsible monoplane. In

this connection there is herewith shown a remarkable picture of Lincoln Beachey standing by while Mrs. Barney Oldfield dedicated the machine in which he was to meet his death, with a bottle of champagne. This is the last picture of Lincoln Beachey and was taken a few days before his death. At the time he expressed the belief that he would meet his death in this new plane, according to the prominent men and women who witnessed the christening of the monoplane.

Lincoln Beachey was one of the last of the aviators on the "Death Reel" picture, the survivors having forewarned the aviation game forever. When that picture was taken in St. Louis several years ago, death might have been the photographer who snapped the bulb. At least the grim phantom was hovering near and marked practically each one of the aviators before him as a possible victim.

THE YOUNGEST VICTIM.

Probably the youngest of the sacrifices to the public's desires for novelty and thrills, who stood before the camera on a sunny summer afternoon to be photographed with the most daring of birdmen, was Andrew Drew. "Andy," as he was familiarly known, was the son of a wealthy banker and was engaged as a reporter for a newspaper. His career as an aeronaut was started in about 1908 when ballooning became popular in St. Louis. Andy made him just suitable for such a trip. While the more prosaic police reporters of the paper were willing to make one of the first trips made by a St. Louis newspaper reporter for his paper, the city editor considered that Andy Drew could write a better story on the trip. He came back to his office Monday morning thrilled with his experiences and wrote as descriptive and interesting story of the trip as any man could. Thereupon he became a sort of aviation expert for his paper. He "covered" all of the balloon flights and even joined the aviation corps of the National Guard of Missouri to be nearer the beloved air crafts.

When the aeroplanes replaced the balloons, Andrew Drew studied them closely and then gave up newspaper work to become an aviator. "Andy, you're going to kill yourself some day in one of those aeroplanes," reporters told him. "I know it, but it's all in a lifetime," he returned cheerily. Andy met his death in Dayton, O., when his aeroplane caught fire and he was plunged to the ground. Lincoln Beachey in a way felt himself responsible for the death of Andrew Drew just as he did for five other aviators of the "Death Reel," who lost their lives. Drew was a conservative flier and took no chances until he saw Lincoln Beachey defy the forces of the air in somersaults and dangerous loops and he was killed in undertaking similar feats.

PASSING OF PAGE.

Beachey felt partly responsible for the death of Rutherford Page, who tried some of the aviator's daring stunts. Of this Beachey said:

"I watched Rutherford Page trying out some of my stunts in a brand new Curtiss biplane. He was foolishly brave and I tried to warn him. He laughed at me. He insisted he could do anything I did. I helped to untangle his broken body from that very machine a few minutes later. As we were working to free his body his mechanic said to me: 'Mr. Beachey, Rutherford said to me just before he went up that he was going to outdo your stunts or break his neck. An unexpected puff of wind and it was the end. He was trying one of my "Dutch Rolls" when death overtook him."

Beachey also held himself partly responsible for the death of Phil Parmelee, another aviator of the "Death Reel." The latter attempted to perform Beachey's stunt of making a figure eight with his hands off the levers and guiding the machine only with his body by swaying in the direction he wanted to go. The machine overturned and he plunged to his death.

Horace Kearney attempted to outshine Beachey. He attempted a flight over the ocean from Los Angeles to San Francisco with Chester Lawrence, automobile editor of the Los Angeles Examiner, as his passenger. Their bodies never were found and only a single pontoon of the aeroplane was found afloat to tell of the tragedy.

Billy Badger, a college graduate and a wealthy man, went to his death in Chicago attempting Beachey's daring drop. His machine failed to right itself and its planes were crumpled. Eugene Ely lost his life in Georgia attempting to imitate Beachey's "Dutch Roll." He lost control of the machine.

Cromwell Dixon, a mere boy, also

lost his life trying to "be better than Beachey." Cal Rodgers, who made the first coast-to-coast flight, lost his life in Los Angeles Bay doing the dip and chasing sea gulls to the amusement of the crowd. John Frisbie lost his life doing Beachey's "Ocean Roll." Ralph Johnston and Arch Hoxey, both members of the "Death Reel" film, lost their lives in daring stunts.

A TRAGIC STATEMENT.

Beachey's most tragic statement in regard to death of those who attempted to surpass his daring feats was: "And one by one they have hurtled down, clutching at the robes of God, to smash on earth. Death has left me alone because I was a good servant to him."

Besides the death of those who followed him in his conquest of the air, Beachey killed Miss Ruth Hildreth and seriously injured her sister, Helen, at Rochester, N. Y., October 7, 1913. The girls and their escorts were standing on a hangar when the daring aviator lost control of his machine and on his way to earth struck them. This event impressed him more than anything of his career.

While he regarded the death of aviators who attempted to out-class

HOWARD GILL



ANDREW DREW



ALBERT BOND LAMBERT

and taking a sheer plunge, similar to one in which Page lost his life, he descended into a gully into which Arch Hoxey fell to his death just a year before.

From the grand stand it appeared that Beachey had fallen, and when he did not reappear after an interval of more than a minute, doctors, reporters and mechanics rushed in automobiles to the scene, but Beachey reappeared a few minutes later and flew over the course.

HE CAME BACK.

Beachey retired for a year, saying he never would fly again, but came back in September, 1913, and started the second chapter of his career that ended in his death.

At the time of his retirement he said: "The chance of being killed never worried me while I was flying. Every man and woman I met during my career, predicted that I would be killed. This only annoyed me. It did not get on my nerves."

"I made up my mind that if I did tumble from the air I did not want my final bump to stamp me as a piker. If it came my time to die I wanted to drop thousands of feet."

I wanted the grandstands and grounds to be packed with a huge, cheering mob and the band crashing out the latest ragtime piece. And when the ambulance or worse hauled me away I wanted them all to say: 'Well, he certainly was flying some.'

"I knew I was skillful. I had every confidence in my ability. I knew just as sure as fate that some day there would be a tiny flaw in a piece of steel. It would not take longer than the tick of a clock and then it would be all over."

"I always believed I would be killed if I stuck to the game long enough."

When Lincoln Beachey made this statement on his retirement as an aviator he did not know how true it was and how he eventually would come to his death through an accident—the collapse of the steel work of his machine.

That Lincoln Beachey invited death has been shown by his daring flights. With his demise the United States is left with no great aviators and practically the last of the great and fatal "Death Reel" film has gone to his death.

Bad for the Laurels.

It is related of William Dean Howells that he one time was admonishing a young novelist, who, after writing a fine novel, had produced only slight commercial things. "Two critics," he said to the young man, "were discussing a certain author."

"His laurels," said the first critic, 'already seem faded and bedraggled.' "That," the other critic agreed, 'is because he has been resting on them.'"

Advertising Pays.

"Does advertising pay? I lost a five-dollar bill on the street."

"Well?"

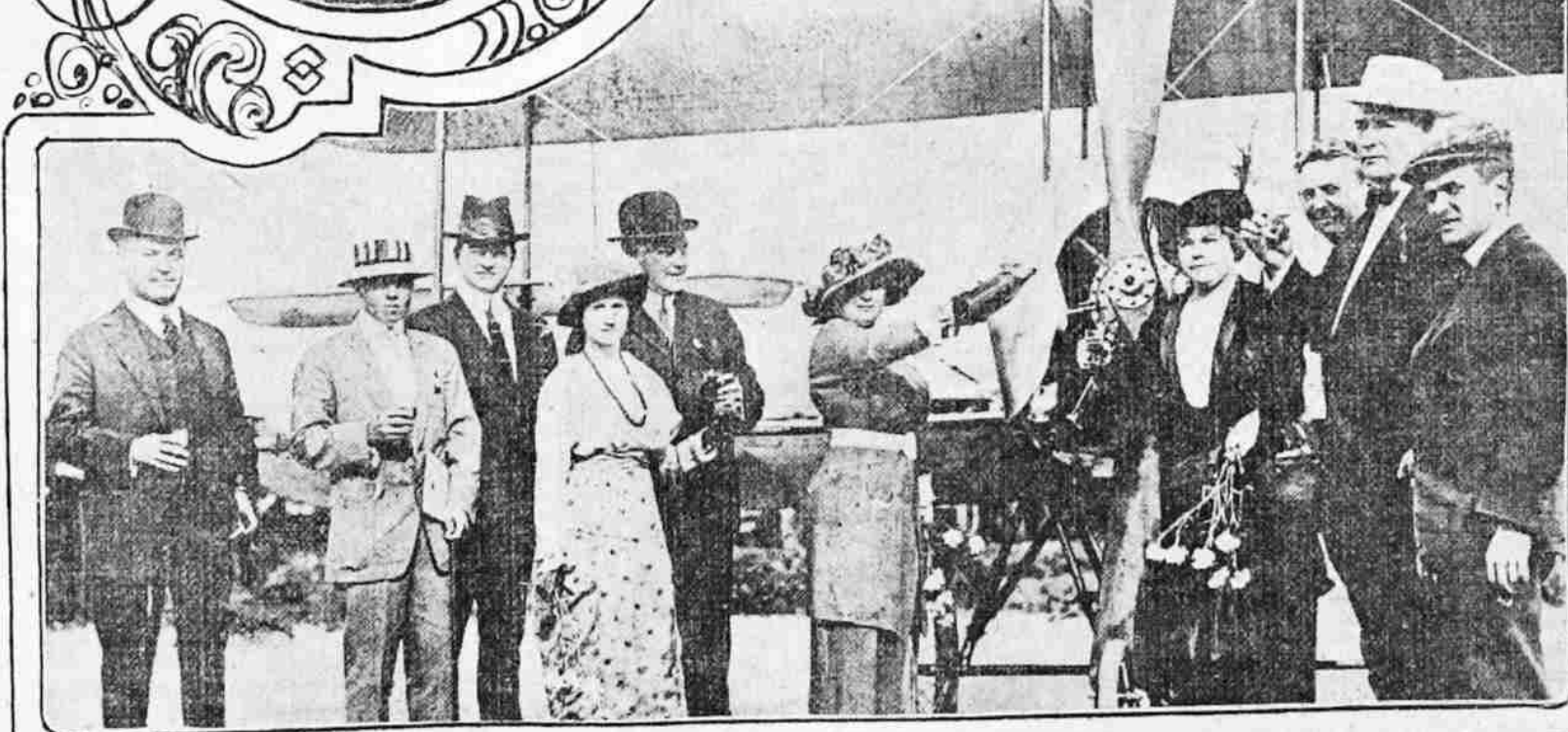
"I advertised, and so far I have received three five-dollar bills."

A Practical Youth.

George—"If some one should leave you fifty thousand dollars, what would you do?"

Jack—"I'd run over to Europe, buy a title, and then come back and marry a millionheiress."

LINCOLN BEACHEY, AT EXTREME RIGHT, WATCHING MRS. BARNEY OLDFIELD CHRISTEN MONOPLANE IN WHICH HE LATER LOST HIS LIFE



him as their own foolhardiness he felt personally responsible for the death of this girl, although a coroner's jury declared it unavoidable.

In his daring career Beachey fell many times, was always ready for and expectant of death by a fall, but eluded death until it overtook

him at the Panama-Pacific Exposition, seven years after he started to defy the grim monster. This dare-devil aviator told reporters at various times that he already felt death behind him, practically clutching at his steering wheel and attempting to send him to death,

during his flights. It seemed as if the grim reaper always was behind. Beachey had somewhat of a super-natural content on with the phantom of immortality. The visage of death always was before him, he said, and his most daring flights were taken more in defiance than

for the money. So defiant was he of his nemesis that in Los Angeles, Cal., in January, 1912, he tempted instant destruction by emulating the feats of two aviators who had met death at the same spot in the same way. Ascending to a height of 400 feet